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THE STUDY DOCUMENTS – SOURCES FOR A HISTORY OF THE
INTERWAR HIGHER EDUCATION IN TRANSYLVANIA.
CASE STUDY: THE ORADEA ACADEMY OF LAW¹

Florentina Chirodea *

Abstract: *As a part and an important, even determinant resource in the complex process of national culture development, education has always been a topic addressed by the Romanian history researchers. Education has been given the greatest attention in partial monographs and monographs of branches of education up to syntheses and treatises because its evolution has been a part of the Romanians' economic, social and political development. The present study brings into the attention of the historians an unpublished category of documents – study documents used or issued by the university or academic secretariats. The case study focuses on the Oradea Academy of Law students' quantitative data processing mainly upon the Romanian period of the institution. The tables and graphs complete the picture of the students' life on the west frontier of Great Romania while the analyses of the documents bring about new information in the study of the intellectual elite.*

Keywords: *study documents, higher education in Transylvania, Oradea Academy of Law*

Introduction

The role that the higher education institutions have in the developing and strengthening of a state gives them a double feature, on the one hand, the formation of skilled labor, according to the demand existing in the society, and on the other hand, the participation in the development of science and culture, respectively their mass distribution. The intellectual elite formation was not a constant process, in the evolution of higher education being recorded times of crisis in which there is an "overproduction" or "excess" of graduates in relation to their employability chances. The phenomenon, appeared almost in all the European countries during 1830-1890, it is also present in the inter-war period, especially around 1930. The specialists that have noticed the imbalance between the request and offer

¹ This paper was published in Sorin Șipoș, Gabriel Moisa, Mircea Brie, Florin Sfrengeu, Ion Gumenăi (coord.), *The Historian's Atelier: Sources, Methods, Interpretations*, Academia Română, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, Cluj-Napoca, 2012, ISBN: 978-973-7784-84-1, p. 244-257

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for the university graduates have characterised the phenomenon as a „dangerous social disfunction”, in terms of a potential high level of unemployment among the intellectuals².

In this context, investigating the instructive – educational process in Transylvania must be made taking into account their integration into the socio - historical conditions of development of the interwar society, the research couldn't be made without consulting the original documentary sources. The issue of those two categories of actors, the teaching staff and the students, which define the activity of the oldest high schools in a vast region of Eastern Europe, The Oradea Academy of Law, is extensive and pursues the dynamic of the institution in its natural correlation with the development of other places of culture and science. Responding during the 150 years of existence to a „large demand” of the population from the area „Bihor, Salaj, Satmar and the whole western region of border”³, forming generations of lawyers who, then, made the school and the Romanian culture proud, the Academy of Oradea functioned in a region „seen as strategic area, to which it is easy to get to from Budapest on road, railway or radio and followed by irredentism”⁴. The period 1919 – 1934, known as „the Romanian stage”⁵ of the Academy, influenced by the cultural offensive, which followed the Great Union⁶, it is marked by the important transformations in the development of the high education and the process of structuring the educational institutions. Another important factor was also the legislation of the academic education from this stage, the elaboration of the frame for uniting the high education needed enough time⁷.

In the absence of such legislation, the study documents that were used or issued by the Academy's secretary for keeping the record of students and their professional evolution had been elaborated and written under the institution's functioning regulations, the latter being approved by the Hungarian authorities in 1911. The research of these new sources involves the usage of analysis on the document and the quantitative processing of the data goes to statistic methods specific to the research of elite history, in order to complete the picture of the inter-war student life at the western border of the Great Romania.

Study documents used or issued by the secretary of the Academy

Inside the National Archives – Bihor and Cluj County Services, there are testimonies of registration of students at the Oradea Academy of Law, which are made „under certificate of the successful completion of high school, classic and modern, accompanied by the proof of the adulthood exam, capacity or baccalaureate”. Actually, the registration of students were made at the beginning of every school year by submitting a file containing: the proof of graduation from high school - high school diploma or certificate of maturity, extracted from the transcript, nationality certificate, certificate of morality and certificate of need, in case of seeking social support from the Academy.

² Fritz Ringer, „The quantitative approach” in Walter Rüegg (coord.), *A History of the University in Europe. Vol. III, Universities in the nineteenth and early twentieth Centuries (1800 – 1945)*, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 234

³ *Memoriu cu privire la Facultatea de Drept „Regele Carol II” din Oradea*, Tiparul Tipografiei Diecezane, Oradea, 1933, p. 3-4

⁴ Lucian Leuştean, *România şi Ungaria în cadrul „Noii Europe” (1920 – 1923)*, Polirom Press, Iaşi, 2003, p. 172-174

⁵ Dorel Moţiu, Augustin Țărău, „Academia de Drept din Oradea – repere istorice” in *Aletheia*, nr. 13/2002, Oradea, University of Oradea Press, 2002, p. 39

⁶ Lucian Leuştean, *op.cit.*, p. 94-99

⁷ We refer to the *University Autonomy Law* adopted in 1931, respectively the *Law for organizing higher education* published in the Official Gazette from 22 April 1932. See *Antologia legilor învățământului din România*, Sciences of Education Institute Publishing, Bucureşti, 2006.

Based on this file, at the beginning of each semester the student completed the transcript sheet, a standard form in which identification data were recorded, namely the: name, year, month, date and place of birth, religion and nationality. Besides these, there were needed information regarding the father's or the legal guardian's name, respectively „his condition and residence” (profession and residence). The previous studies are listed in section which aims the obtained maturity certificate, specifying the date, number and appointment of the institution that issued the proof of graduate. Another category of information refers to the scholarships the student obtained, the quantum and the foundation which gives it, as well as data referring to the military situation mentioned in the category „it is voluntary this year”. In the second part of the document every student completed the name of the classes he wanted to attend during the semester, specifying the weekly number of hours and the titular teacher. At the end of the document, the student had to declare „the residence from the locality”, all the data being recorded on their own oath under „their own signature”. The transcript sheets were filed at the Secretary of the Academy, who archived them per year of study and in alphabetical order of students, for the extraordinary ones (meaning those who graduated the high school classes but without the baccalaureate exam) using a form in another color in order to be easy to identify. The order given by the Diligent Council in 1919, through which the citizens of the Transylvania Province have the right to use their mother tongue in written as well as verbally permitted the completion of the transcript sheets forms in Hungarian until 1921, from September the same year the documents being completed only in Romanian. Another aspect that needs to be emphasized is the fact that until 1934 these study documents had the same standardized format, until 1921 written in Hungarian, from September the same year Romanian being used.

Based upon the transcript sheets are completed the *Transcripts*. For the academic years 1919 – 1920 and 1920 – 1921 there are used semestrial registers, with a standardized form, written in Hungarian, in which the students are registered in alphabetical order, per year of study and on categories (ordinary and extraordinary).

The category of such a register coincides with that of the transcript sheet, the transcript being only a procedure of centralized emphasizing of students and the classes they enrolled in. Moreover, beginning with the school year 1921-1922, in the consulted archive funds, this type of study document have never been found.

The fundamental exams and that of bachelor degree are public and oral. At the beginning of every exam session, the students were assigned on lists posted by the Dean of the Faculty, specifying the day, hour and place of the exam. Every examiner teacher received from the Dean's office the list of the candidates for the examination accompanied by a form of protocol for each student. The grades given at the exam vary from 0 to 20, in order to pass the student needed to get at least 12. The result of the fundamental exams is established by a committee formed by examiner teachers, presided by the Dean and it is registered in the *Exam Register*. Made in each session, in this document were registered the equivalences of the grades obtained by the students at the fundamental exams I, II and III. The results of the examinations were equivalented as follows: for the 12-13-14 grades – it is given the mention admitted with majority; 14-15-16 – admitted in unanimity; 17-18 – admitted with a distinction with the majority of votes; 19-20 – admitted with distinction with the unanimity of votes. The student who was noted with 10 at one object, and at the other disciplines had at least 15, could pass the exam with the decision of the examining committee, fact registered in the observation category in the register. The candidate rejected 3 times at the same discipline was declared a failure and he could repeat the whole fundamental exam of that year in the following session.

At the end of schooling and after promoting the fundamental exams, the students received a graduating certificate, the *Absolutory*. Along with the baccalaureate diploma and

the extract of birth, the Absolutory completed the application for the registration in the license exam. Not a diploma, the studies document had, however, an official form through which it was certified the attendance to classes of the graduate, mentioning the listened colleges, teachers and the grades obtained at the exams. At the end it was specified the candidate's academic conduct at the bachelor degree exam, the document being confirmed by "the signature of the Dean and the seal of the Law Academy".

For the students who passed the fundamental exams and the bachelor degree exam with majority of votes it was granted the title "Licensed in Law", and those who promoted with unanimity of votes received the title „*magna cum laude*". The distinction was recorded also on the diploma, being conferred in a solemn meeting in front of the teachers and the students of the Faculty. The diploma was given in the name of is R.M the King, had the seal of the Academy and it was signed by the Public Education and Religious Affairs Minister, the Dean and the graduate. In the studied archive funds there is no copy of this study document, so the information about these documents are taken from the correspondence that the Law Academy of Oradea had with the Ministry of Education.

Once with the approval of the *Project of modifying the Regulation of the Oradea Faculty of Law*, in 1931, the academic school of Oradea was permitted to give also the "title of PhD in Law", with the possibility of issuing two diplomas: one for legal sciences, respectively political-economic sciences. The PhD title is given to the candidates who sustained "a printed thesis upon a subject from the specialty chosen by the candidate", after promoting successfully the exams of the two years of doctorate studies. The thesis is being sustained in front of a committee formed by a chairman and two members, the subject of the thesis being approved by the Dean and the president of the thesis and registered in a Register of thesis of the Faculty. The appreciation of the work is done with the unanimous vote of the commission, by providing grades like sufficient, pretty good, very good and very good with praise, the PhD students who get the last qualifier having the right to be called "winners of Oradea Faculty of Law".

The study documents – sources for a quantitative approach of the student body

During the period that lasts from the end of the First World War until the end of the Second one, the Romanian law faculties reach their maxim development on what concerns the number of departments as well as that of students and graduates. The students's statistics, at the level of the 1928-1929 academic year, shows that the majority of those enrolled were studying law (38,63%), then Letters and Philosophy (26,58%) and only in the third row Exact Sciences Faculties (16,84%), the last place being occupied by graduates of secondary studies enrolled at Veterinary Medicine (0,93%). In consequence, the majority of students in Romania wanted to become lawyers, thinking also to a political career⁸. For instance, at the Faculty of Law in Bucharest, there were, during the 1932-1933 academic year, 30 departments – of which four of Civil Law. The number of students of this faculty gets to 6825 in the same academic year, and that of graduates to 990 – the biggest number of graduates of a faculty in the country. A similar situation is also at the Law Faculty at the University of Iasi, as well as that of the University of Cluj⁹, the latter having enrolled, in 1932-1933, 1813 students¹⁰.

⁸ Vlad Georgescu, *Istoria românilor de la origini până în zilele noastre*, 3rd Edition, Humanitas Publishing, București, 1992, p. 219

⁹ Constantin C. Giurescu (coord.), *Istoria învățământului din România. Compendiu*, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, București, 1971, p. 328

¹⁰ *Anuarul Universității Regele Ferdinand I Cluj*, Institutul de Arte Grafice „Ardealul”, Cluj, 1933, p. 50

Compared to the other European universities, “the Law Academy of Oradea presents itself in more and more satisfying conditions”, having “an university number” of 286 students, closed to the Salamanca University (Spain), which “it doesn’t count at all the four faculties only 3-400 students” at the level of the 1926 academic year. Also, the University of St. Francis - Xavier (France) enrolled in the same year “in total 211 students at all its faculties”, and the University of Galway (Ireland) had, in 1925, 186 students enrolled “at all the faculties together”. In Italy, the Oradea academic school could have been compared, regarding the number of students, with the University of Ferrara – 450 students enrolled at “three faculties and a pharmacy school”, and in Switzerland with the University of Fribourg “researched by many strangers” with 620 students divided on four faculties, 150 – 160 per faculty¹¹.

The constant increase of the number of students it was not influenced by the seriousness of exams, from the data presented in Table 1 being able to make an analysis of the promovability at I, II and III fundamental exams, respectively for those of finalizing of studies. In consequence, based on the studied documents in the archive, we can state that the number of the sustained exams followed, naturally, the increasing tendency of the number of students who attended the courses of the Oradea Law Academy. But, if we compare this number to that of the sustained exams, it can be observed that in the 1919-1920 academic year, only 64% of them managed to attend to and pass the exams, a promovability percent of 35% being registered at the III fundamental exam. The next academic year, the exams’ promovability percent increases to 90%, besides the students enrolled normally to these exams, according to the regulation, being also those who did not pass the exams in the previous academic year, and this influenced significantly the report between students enrolled in a school year and the exams attended and passed by them.

Table 1. *The promovability at the exams sustained by the students of the Oradea Academy of Law during 1919-1921¹²*

| | | 1919 – 1920 academic year | | 1920 – 1921 academic year | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| | | Exams attended | Promovability | Exams attended | Promovability |
| Annual exams | I fundamental | 25 | 38,46% | 95 | 58,28% |
| | II fundamental | 12 | 85,71% | 69 | 100% |
| | III fundamental | 24 | 33,33% | 46 | 100% |
| Exams of finalizing of studies | State exam | 11 | 100% | 26 | 100% |
| | Law exam | 0 | - | 4 | 100% |

A different element is the law exam, which the Academy organizes, despite the fact that its own students did not choose this category to finalize the studies. Constituting and approving the examination commissions was possible due to the fact that at the Academy remained valid the Hungarian regulations, the authorities in Cluj directioning to this institution numerous requests of finalising of studies began before the war and interrupted because of it. It is the case of Bejan Cornel, one of the 4 graduates in Legal Sciences – prefect replacement, graduate of the University of Cluj in 1902, or that of Dupeza

¹¹ *Buletinul Academiei de Drept din Oradea. 1918/19 – 1927/28*, Tipografia și Librăria Românească S.A. Oradea, Oradea, 1928 (further *Buletinul ...*), p. 11

¹² National Archives – The Bihor County Service (further A.N. – S.J.Bh.), *fond Academia de Drept din Oradea*, dos 562/1919-1920, f. 363 and National Archives – The Cluj County Service (further A.N. – S.J.Cj.), *fond Facultatea de Drept Oradea*, file 22, f. 1

Petru – reviewer at Sedria Orfanală in Timișoara, who received the approval of the Department of Academic Education inside the Cluj Secretary in order to attend to the legal exam in front of the commission at the Academy¹³.

From the data presented in Table 2¹⁴ it can be observed that during 1922 – 1930 the promovability decreases compared to that from the 1920 – 1921 academic year, on what concerns the II and III fundamental exams, respectively the bachelor degree one, increasing, in exchange, the number of students enrolled in the exam sessions. This fact attracts the attention of the officials of the War Ministry, the Maramures Recruiting Centre, requiring to the Academy's leaders a "table, with all the data for each student enrolled in the 1922 – 1923 academic year", the legislation providing that the students to be "postponed" from executing the military service "for continuing the studies" only with the approval of the Recruiting Section inside the mentioned ministry. The superior military officials expressed their fear that "a big part of the young men postponed for studies, enroll only on papers to different schools, for which they request postponing, and then they don't attend the courses, minding their own private matters, as trading or other job for which the postpone was approved and the delay of military service also approved, some of them attending only in appearance, failing the exams due to the lack of knowledge". In order to have a more exact record of the students postponed from the military service, the War Ministry issues an order in 1921 through which the academic institutions had to forward these data annually. After the checking, the Sighet Recruiting Centre approves remaining "at studies 8 students" in the academic year 1922-1923¹⁵.

Table 2. *The promovability at the exams sustained by the students of the Oradea Academy of Law during 1922 - 1928*¹⁶

| | | academic year 1922 – 1923 | | academic year 1923 - 1924 | | academic year 1924 - 1925 | | academic year 1927 - 1928 | |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| | | Exams attended | Promova- bility [%] | Exams attended | Promova- bility [%] | Exams attended | Promova- bility [%] | Exams attended | Promova- bility [%] |
| Annual exams | I fundamental | 88 | 61,36 | 97 | 41,23 | 108 | 54,63 | 102 | 58,82 |
| | II fundamental | 58 | 72,41 | 47 | 65,95 | 65 | 73,85 | 104 | 58,65 |
| | III fundamental | 55 | 72,72 | 41 | 68,29 | 51 | 68,63 | 117 | 58,12 |
| Exams of finalizing of studies | Bachelor degree exam | 14 | 92,85 | 46 | 69,56 | 52 | 67,31 | 99 | 43,43 |

It must be noticed that for the period 1922-1928, over 50% of the students enrolled to the fundamental exams passed. In 1932 it was registered another decrease of the promovability of exams, of a total of 446 students enrolled, only 36% managed to pass the exams¹⁷. Referring to the bachelor degree exam, if in 1923 14 graduates with diploma were registered, 92,85% of the students enrolled for finalizing the studies, in the academic year 1927-1928, the percentage of those who passed decreases significantly, getting to 43,43%. From 1929 there are registered requests of graduates of the Law Faculty of Cluj to sustain the bachelor degree exam in Oradea. Their number is not big, at the secretary of the Academy being put, until 1931, 6 requests, the graduates of this faculty having the obligation to sustain

¹³ *Ibidem*, f. 390, 392

¹⁴ There are presented data for only four academic years, because, for the others, the studied archival documents contain partial data on the promovability at final and fundamental exams.

¹⁵ A.N. – S.J.Cj., *fond cit.*, file 43, f. 8 și 28

¹⁶ A.N. – S.J.Cj., *fond cit.*, file 117, f. 18-20, 22-24, 42-43, 55-56

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, file 137, f. 1 - 61, file 138, f. 2 - 60 and file 139, f. 2 - 61

three-four extra exams¹⁸. Naturally, in a period of economic crisis, the decision of the students from Cluj was influenced by the lower taxes of examination existing in Oradea. Also, another category of graduates are those who graduated a law faculty abroad. In order to practice law in Romania, those who graduated abroad, equaled their diploma in the Romanian academic centres that had the closest curricula. At the Oradea faculty, during 1928-1931 there are registered 8 requests: 5 for the Paris Law Faculty graduates, 2 for the Szeged graduates and one for a graduate of the Faculty of Lille¹⁹.

In 16 to 18 February 1934, at the Law Faculty of Oradea there are organized the first doctoral examinations for both sections: legal and economic - political. The event is mentioned in the issue of February 25 of the newspaper "The West Gazette" indicating the graduates of doctoral studies. Thus, at the Department of Legal Sciences, the commission formed by professors Bogdan Ionescu, Aurelian Ionaşcu, Alexandru Angelescu and Tiberiu Moşoiu, declare as graduates the followings: Bianka Klein, Weiner and Mut (the article in the newspaper does not mention the surname of the graduates). Another commission formed by professors Andrei Sigmond, George Strat, Gheorghe Sofronie, Liviu Lazăr and Bogdan Ionescu, declare graduates for the Department of Economic-political Sciences the followings: Petre Baruția (commander of the 17th Division Oradea) – *rated very good and praise from the Commission*, Csedö Adalbert, Vasile Avram and Ioan Mojeu²⁰.

In terms of age of the Academy students (Table 3, chart 1) it couldn't be statistically registered only the studies documents of three academic years: 1919 - 1920, 1920 - 1921 and 1922 - 1923, being registered the representative data for highlighting the distribution of students by age. Thus, the academic year 1919 - 1920 shows a uniform distribution of those enrolled at the Academy around the age groups between 19 and 26 years.

Table 3. *Students enrolled during 1919 - 1923 by age*²¹

| University Year | Age | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | 17 years | 18 years | 19 years | 20 years | 21 years | 22 years | 23 years | 24 years | 25 years | 26 years | 27 years | 28 years | 29 years | 30 - 34 years | 35 - 39 years | 40 - 44 years |
| 1919-1920 (95 students in 2 nd sem.) | 1 | 2 | 10 | 12 | 12 | 4 | 10 | 10 | 7 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| 1920-1921 (273 students in 2 nd sem.) | 1 | 10 | 13 | 25 | 37 | 44 | 34 | 23 | 15 | 13 | 11 | 8 | 8 | 15 | 11 | 8 |
| 1922-1923 (294 students in 2 nd sem.) | 5 | 11 | 19 | 39 | 45 | 39 | 18 | 20 | 19 | 10 | 10 | 14 | 10 | 20 | 9 | 5 |

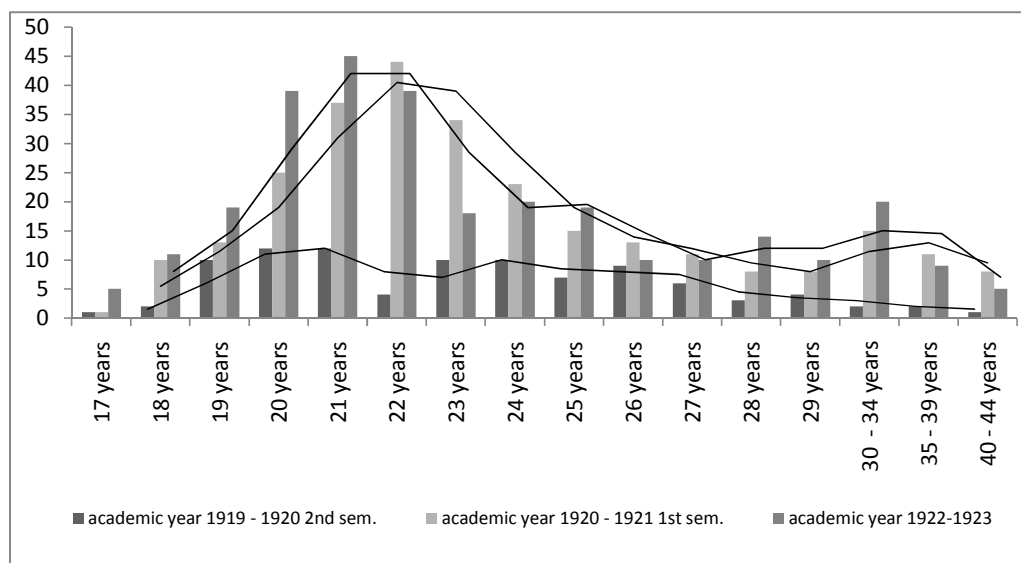
¹⁸ A.N. – S.J.Bh., *fond cit.*, file 594/1931-1932, f. 25 and 45-53, respectively A.N. – S.J.Cj., *fond cit.*, file 102, f.12

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, f. 75, 78, 82-84, 99-104, și *Ibidem*, f. 20,21 și 36

²⁰ Livia Ghiurcuța, Luminița Zamfira Vînturache, Rodica-Mihaela Turcaș, Rodica Angela Sabău, *Raze de lumină în cultura orădeană interbelică*, Primus Publishing, Oradea, 2010, p. 42

²¹ The data were taken from A.N. – S.J.Bh., *fond cit.*, file 563, 564, 565, 566, 567 și 568

Chart 1. *Students enrolled during 1919 - 1923 by age*



For the next two academic years 1920-1921 and 1922-1923, the data show a peak around the age group between 21 and 23. Therefore, the number of listeners registered at the Academy was, in the first academic year of the analyzed period, homogeneous within 8 years, during the following years, due to the actions of the Ruling Council, and those of the General Secretary of Cluj, the Academy registers a large number of students in first year, so we do not find the same kind of homogeneity of students divided by age groups, identifying a maximum period of three years only (between 21 - 23 years).

The study documents - evidence for the emancipation of women during the interwar period

During World War I, the Romanian woman came out from the crowd once with the enrollment of her husband, brother, son or father in the army. The certainty of intellectual inferiority, that justified the prohibition of participation in the political life, is relative, women begin to fight against the exclusion to which they were, traditionally, subject, starting to feel uncomfortable between cultural references that limit the number of options. Whether peasants with household care, nurses in hospitals campaign mobilized in the home front, working in factories, having to endure war effort or the wives of politicians, women were able to ally and prove the legitimacy of their claims²². The Romanian interwar mental attributes the woman the role of wife, mother and administratrix of the house, at an European level manifesting a phenomenon of marginalization or exclusion of women from all activities in the areas of public life. Even after granting the right to vote, politics continued to be the privilege of men, women's movements must resist discourses, which often sought to demote the sphere of

²² Marian Pruteanu, „Discursuri despre femeie în România dintre cele două războaie mondiale” in Alin Ciupală, *Despre femei și istoria lor în România*, University of Bucharest Press, Bucharest, 2004, <http://ebooks.unibuc.ro/istorie/ciupala/conditiafemeii.htm>, accessed on 1st of February 2012

domestic. In life, employees have had to fight for recognition and equal rights to those held by men²³.

In this context, records and transcripts stored in the Oradea Academy of Law, the National Archives – Service of Bihor County, keep evidence that record a shy beginning of female emancipation in the Crisana region, the first student being registered in the fall of 1920. In the registry book prepared for the first semester, Ardelean Georgina was on the 194 position, having the statute of extraordinary student²⁴. The 18 years old young lady came from Osand, Tinca and was the daughter of Ardelean Petru, Greek Catholic priest in the same locality. The student of Romanian nationality, graduated from the Greek-Catholic Girls Civil School Beius²⁵, a secondary education institution, funded in 1896 by Bishop Mihail Pavel for the future priests', teachers' and Romanian officials' wives to stop being "some illiterate women, and to have a fine education, understanding the scope of the intellectual job of their husbands". The girls school had a boarding-school, being supported in its mission by the United Romanian Episcopate of Oradea, which supported all the school's spendings from "their own fields' incomes". Converted in 1919 into the Romanian United Girls High School in Beius, the school formed "almost all the teachers, priestesses and wives of officials from Crisana" becoming a real support for the Romanian families who wanted to offer a certain degree of education to their daughters²⁶.

Wanting a career of public official, Georgina Ardelean enrolled to the Law Academy in Oradea in the 1920 – 1921 academic year, attending the courses of Roman Law, Constitutional Law, the History of Law, Political Economy, Psychology, Ethics and Accounting. Besides these disciplines, the young lady had to take a suplimentary exam at Latins in order to be registered as ordinary student. The exam was not passed, so that the girl registers in the fall of 1921 again in the 1st year, being registered also as extraordinary student²⁷.

Her university road is interrupted during the summer of 1922, during the following years of study Georgina Ardelean not being recorded in any document prepared by the Secretariat of the Academy of Law. Perhaps the determination with which the student wanted the emancipation was not sufficient, school fees, to which were added also the accommodation, the Academy not having a boarding-school, could not be supported by a Romanian family with a medium income.

Another graduate of the Girls High-School in Beiuș, Emilia Horvath, follows the example of her colleague, registering in 1922 at the courses of the Oradea Academy. After the first semester during which she is registered as extraordinary student, the young lady is registered in the spring of 1923 as ordinary student. From the transcript sheet we find out that she was born on 7 January 1900 in Ciuhoi, 1 Bihor County, being the daughter of Ioan Horvath, Romanian orthodox, headmaster of primary school in Oradea, the girls graduating the academic institution in 1925.

The process of women emancipation continues, during the following years (Table 4) the phenomenon of enrolling of young girls to the courses of the Academy increases, their number becoming bigger from year to year.

²³ Angela Kershaw, Angela Kimyongür, „Women in Europe between the Wars: a Culture of Contradictions” in Angela Kershaw, Angela Kimyongür, *Women in Europe between the Wars*, Ashgate Publishing, Burlington, SUA, 2007, p. 1-2

²⁴ A.N. – S.J. Bh., *fond cit.*, file 567, f. 28

²⁵ *Ibidem*, file 568, f. 41

²⁶ Petre Dejeu, *Instituțiile culturale din municipiul Oradea și județul Bihor*, Tipografia Franklin, Oradea, 1937, p.190, 245-246. See also Iudita Călușer, *Liceul Român Unit de Fete din Beiuș (1896-1948). Monografie istorică*, Logos '94 Publishing, Oradea, 2011

²⁷ A.N. – S.J. Bh., *fond cit.*, file 569, f.17

Table 4. *The number of female and male students during 1919 – 1933*²⁸

| Academic year | Total no. of students | Female | Men |
|---------------|-----------------------|--------|-----|
| 1920 - 1921 | 273 | 1 | 272 |
| 1921 - 1922 | 379 | 1 | 378 |
| 1922 - 1923 | 294 | 1 | 293 |
| 1923 – 1924 | 204 | 5 | 199 |
| 1924 – 1925 | 219 | 7 | 212 |
| 1925 – 1926 | 286 | 8 | 278 |
| 1926 – 1927 | 296 | 13 | 283 |
| 1927 – 1928 | 280 | 15 | 265 |
| 1928 – 1929 | 311 | 31 | 281 |
| 1930 – 1931 | 432 | 41 | 391 |
| 1931 – 1932 | 557 | 48 | 509 |
| 1932 – 1933 | 774 | 67 | 707 |

Analyzing the figures we see that the number of female entered the Oradea Academy of Law did not exceed 10% of all students, during 1925 – 1933 the number of female graduates being extremely low²⁹. In 1932 it was recorded the first female PhD, 6 in the legal chain, and one student in Economic-Political Sciences. These figures are additional to those recorded at national level, women gaining the right to plead and be part of the Bar Lawyers since 1914. With the perspective of employment in civil service jobs or pursue a political career in Romanian universities and academies, dominated almost 100% of men - on the chair and in banks³⁰, begin to attend classes as ever more young ladies who want to have a chance in life through higher education. Faced with this reality, also the Romanian public consciousness accommodates with the prospect of new roles that women also could have in extra-familial space, finding them suitable for certain intellectual professions³¹.

Conclusions

The statistical processing of the data given by the study documents used or issued by the Secretary of the Law Academy of Oradea has shown the increasing trend in the number of students enrolled at the courses of this academic institution, in the Romanian era of the academy's life. The tendency is recorded, after the World War I, also at regional, national and European level, the large influx of graduates of secondary schools towards the Law Faculties being observed also by the researchers of the Romanian Pedagogic Institute lead by professor G. G. Antonescu, who published in 1933 the study *The Organization of Education*, in order to bring into the attention of the Romanian public a series of "worrying statistics"³². The

²⁸ A.N. – S.J.Cj, *fond cit.*, file 24, f. 15, 21, 38, 40, 48, 57, 61, 78, 81 and A.N.- S.J. Bh., *fond cit.*, file 594/1931-1932, f. 34 and 36

²⁹ Between 1919 and 1927, only 3 female students enrolled in Oradea Academy of Law were able to obtain a bachelor's degree. See *Buletinul ...*, p. 40 - 42

³⁰ Liliana Popescu, „Condiția femeii în secolul XIX – începutul secolului XX” in Alin Ciupală, *Despre femei și istoria lor în România*, University of Bucharest Press, Bucharest, 2004, <http://ebooks.unibuc.ro/istorie/ciupala/conditiafemeii.htm>, accessed on 1st of February 2012

³¹ Marian Pruteanu, *op.cit.*, <http://ebooks.unibuc.ro/istorie/ciupala/conditiafemeii.htm>, accessed on 1st of February 2012

³² The coordinators of the work, Prof. GG Antonescu and Iosif I. Gabrea, emphasize in the introduction, the study analyzes the Romanian education system compared to the organization of education in major countries worldwide and is a work purely informal and not of doctrine. Thus, in the part related to higher education, there were used statistics on the education in the Reconstructed Romania during 1921/22 - 1928/29 and published in

research highlights the low number of students enrolled at the Romanian universities in the academic year 1928-1929 (31,154 students compared to 2,283,211 young men who have completed a public school, private or religious), as well as the low number of those who get annually the bachelor degree and the PhD (8.2% of the students enrolled manage to get their bachelor degree and the PhD, being 1 graduate at 7,020 inhabitants). Among the causes identified by the authors, "to which it must intervene" there are "insufficient organizational learning opportunities, heavy taxes, the students have great difficulty in living in the city, especially for those from the villages". Another drawback of the university system in Romania, emerged from the processing of data is "youth division in higher education entirely inadequate to the structure social life and future needs"³³. There by, at national level it was observed that there was no concern for a judicious youth guidance to secondary and higher education schools with practical character "³⁴, the academic education risking to become, in this way, "a manufacture of diplomas for lawyers without lawsuits"³⁵. To avoid "overproduction" of graduates in the legal field, the authorities in Bucharest started, in 1932, a radical restructuring of the Romanian higher education, not only of form but of substance. After these measurements, the Law Academy of Oradea was "united", after over a century and a half of unstopped functioning, with the legal faculty inside the University of Cluj, the teachers' staff and the students being transferred, in October 1934, at the Faculty of Law in Cluj.

Despite the increase of access to a higher education of students of secondary schools, the slow process of modernization of Romanian education did not encourage women to study but to focus on their careers as wives and mothers. Even if in the Romanian education system there were secondary schools for girls, state as well as private, the universities allowing their access to higher studies and building professional careers, the statistics do not mention too many women graduates of faculty³⁶. Young girls original from bourgeois families, the Romanian aristocrats, have been educated in a number of schools, a number very low for a long time, have chosen to go, from the end of the 19th century, to Western centres that could offer them an education at their intellectual and financial capacities level³⁷. The graduates with baccalaureate from the Crişana Region have found in the Oradea Academy of Law a solution for an education of quality compared to their training possibilities. It is formed, thus, an elite women, which is a much more demanding social interlocutor with a distinct voice in the interwar Romanian society³⁸.

In conclusion, the researches in the archives belonging to Universities or Academies, allowed studying a separate category of original sources, providing a good deal of data on

1931 by the International Bureau of Education in Geneva, in a material titled *L'organisation de l'instruction publique dans 53 de pays*, data provided by Ministries of Romania, Albania, England, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Switzerland, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Yugoslavia, Japan, Norway, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Russia Soviet, Scotland, Spain, United States, Sweden, Turkey, Hungary.

³³ G.G. Antonescu, Iosif I. Gabrea, *Organizarea învăţământului*, Bucureşti, Institutului Pedagogic Român Press, 1933, p. 43-44

³⁴ Constantin C. Giurescu (coord.), *op.cit.*, p. 264

³⁵ Gabriela C. Cristea, *Reforma învăţământului. O perspectivă istorică (1864 – 1944)*, Editura Didactică şi Pedagogică, Bucharest, 2001, p. 267 - 268

³⁶ Silvana Rachieru, „Includerea/excluderea socială a femeilor în România modernă (1878-1914)” in Alin Ciupală, *Despre femei şi istoria lor în România*, Editura Universităţii din Bucureşti, Bucureşti, 2004, <http://ebooks.unibuc.ro/istorie/ciupala/conditiafemeii.htm>, accessed on 2nd of February 2012

³⁷ Lucian Nastasă, *Itinerarii spre lumea savantă. Tineri din spaţiul românesc la studii în străinătate (1864-1944)*, Cluj-Napoca, Limes Publishing, 2006, p.71-72

³⁸ Marian Pruteanu, *op.cit.*, <http://ebooks.unibuc.ro/istorie/ciupala/conditiafemeii.htm>, accessed on 1st February 2012

students enrolled in higher education institutions in Transylvania. We refer to acts of studies used or issued by the secretariats of high schools, Papers and Records Transcripts, Exams' Catalogs, Records for doctoral theses, Absolutory, Doctoral and Bachelor degree diplomas having a certain documentary value for studying the interwar academic life, the manner and degree in which the school has contributed, by educating young generations to prepare specialists for various fields of economy, to social progress, to the development of culture and civilization in the Great Romania³⁹. In this context, the documentary funds kept in the National Archives Services in Cluj and Bihor County referring to students of the Oradea Academy of Law has historical value, being with other categories of archive documents, testimony to reconstitute panel of Oradea student life in the interwar period.

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³⁹ Ștefan Pascu – ed., *Istoria învățământului din România*, Vol. I, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, Bucharest, 1983, p. 11

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